



Radcliffe College Ltd

Review for Educational Oversight by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

December 2013

Key findings about Radcliffe College Ltd

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in December 2013, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **limited confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of the Association of Business Practitioners (ABP), ATHE Ltd and Pearson.

The team also considers that there can be **limited confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers on behalf of these awarding organisations.

The team considers that reliance **cannot** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Recommendations

The team has identified a number of **recommendations** for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it is **essential** for the provider to:

- ensure that planning for and the design of programmes is coherent and complete (paragraph 1.2).

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:

- ensure the consistent and effective operation of its academic management structures (paragraph 1.1)
- produce its own programme specifications for all higher education programmes (paragraph 1.3)
- review and improve its assessment policy and practices with specific attention to internal verification (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.2)
- formalise the introduction and embedding of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraph 2.4)
- provide sufficient academic staff to cover the required roles and responsibilities (paragraph 2.5)
- introduce end-of-unit surveys for staff and students to inform annual programme monitoring (paragraph 2.7)
- provide opportunities for staff development relating to higher education (paragraph 2.11)
- ensure that a full set of programme, student and quality handbooks are provided to students and staff (paragraph 3.1)
- review, develop and deploy a clear policy and procedures to manage its published information (paragraph 3.4).

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the provider to:

- revise and implement its teaching observation policy and procedures (paragraph 2.6)
- develop effective mechanisms for the identification and sharing of good practice (paragraph 2.12).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at Radcliffe College Ltd (the College), which is a privately funded provider of higher education. The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers on behalf of the Association of Business Practitioners (ABP), ATHE Ltd and Pearson. The review was carried out by Dr Steve Hill and Ms Deborah Trayhurn (reviewers) and Ms Penny Blackie (Coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included quality and management information, details of awarding organisation programmes, the staff and student handbooks, a range of policies and procedures and meetings with staff and students.

The review team also considered the College's use of the relevant external reference points:

- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code)
- the Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF).

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

The College was established in 1993 by two of the current directors. It is located at Radcliffe Building, Oxford Street in central London. Its current vision is 'to be recognised as a quality provider of IESOL and vocational Business and Management programmes in Central London'. This is to be achieved by a focus on the following elements (which form part of its mission statement): 'To be responsive to student demand; to embed and continuously improve and enhance quality assurance across all programmes; to map the UK Quality Code for Higher Education across higher education programmes; and to provide value for money in all that we do'. The College has highly trusted sponsor status (HTS) approved until March 2014. All of the higher education students are international, from nine countries, and 112 students are studying on four higher education programmes at levels 5-7. The higher education provision covers business, management and information and communications technology (ICT). Higher education programmes are taught by five part-time academic staff supported by two professional services staff.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, listed beneath their awarding organisations and with student numbers in brackets:

Association of Business Practitioners (ABP)

- Extended Diploma in Sustainable ICT - level 7 (12)

ATHE Ltd

- Diploma in Management - level 6 (65)

Pearson

- BTEC HNC/HND Business Management - levels 4 and 5 (24)
- BTEC Extended Diploma in Strategic Leadership and Management- level 7 (11)

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/educational-oversight

² www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx

The provider's stated responsibilities

The College clearly delineates its responsibilities delegated by its awarding organisations. ABP, ATHE and Pearson are responsible for curriculum development, overall quality assurance of the awards and advice about how to produce programme specifications. They also lead on the curriculum, recommended teaching materials, and study manuals as part of their collaborative partnership agreements. The College shares responsibility for tutorial guidance, internal review and external verification, appeals, information to students and feedback from them. The College has overall responsibility for curriculum planning, delivery and assessment which includes selecting the combination of units to be delivered, marking, feedback to students and, apart from the ATHE programme, for designing assignments. The College leads on admissions, recruitment and selection, learning resources, annual monitoring reviews, completion and retention and staff development. Awarding organisation contacts provide support to College staff.

Recent developments

The College has recently increased its higher-level provision and has started a review and revision of its current policies and procedures. It has appointed a consultant to assist with this and other tasks. The College intends to align its policies with the Quality Code, and anticipates that this review will be completed within two years. In 2013, the College had around 200 students enrolled on London Centre for Marketing (LCM) programmes. Following the suspension of LCM by Ofqual, the College transferred student enrolments to alternative programmes which meant working with other awarding organisation partners. This transfer is now complete and approximately 100 students who had been on LCM programmes are settled on equivalent programmes. The other 100 students left the College, some because of unsatisfactory attendance and others transferred to similar institutions.

Students' contribution to the review

Students on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. A student submission was received which consisted of answers to a survey and a summary of the responses. Staff at the College informed students about the key features of the review. One student representative produced the summary and invited other students to comment on the outcome. Two groups of students met reviewers during the review visit and several met the Coordinator during the preparatory meeting. The student input was valuable to the team.

Detailed findings about Radcliffe College Ltd

1 Academic standards

How effectively does the College fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1 The College's arrangements for managing academic standards provide a basic structure for oversight of its current operation. Structures to manage academic standards are in development and are not yet clearly defined or embedded. The College's committee activity for the oversight of higher education is at a very early stage of operation.

The College has established an Academic Board to consider strategic and operational aspects of delivery but it has only met once. It is also intended that the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee will consider and refer matters at an operational level to the Academic Board but it is too early to assess its effectiveness. Students are not formally represented on these committees. The Vice Principal oversees curriculum planning, quality assurance processes, is the Director of Marketing and acts as a focal point of contact with the external partner awarding organisations. This is the key academic role in the management function but the Vice Principal acknowledged that he did not yet have the knowledge or experience to carry out these roles with confidence. It is **advisable** for the College to ensure the consistent and effective operation of its academic management structures.

1.2 The College has made some progress with developing approaches to quality assurance by implementing some of the recommendations from the Independent Schools' Inspectorate in 2012. The College had begun to explore a transfer to Pearson before the Ofqual suspension of LCM and staff received training in Pearson approaches and quality assurance requirements on one occasion in April 2013. The College is aware of the Pearson requirements for quality assurance and annual monitoring but has yet to complete the final unit content of the programmes for students as required by the awarding organisation. Students stated that they expect to receive specialist management and marketing routes through HND provision which involves studying specific units. College staff have not designed a curriculum that includes these units. Furthermore, the College has not sufficiently considered the sequencing of units and subsequent potential effects of levels of study on student achievement. In discussion with the team, staff failed to appreciate the requirements for specialist provision in the programme units selected. It is **essential** that the College ensures that planning for and the design of programmes is coherent and complete.

1.3 Partnership agreements with awarding organisations outline the College's responsibilities for management and oversight of academic standards. Most of these recognise that a provider's responsibilities include the design and implementation of all assessment and management of summative assessment processes, apart from ATHE Ltd which designs its own sample assignment briefs. Providers can design their own assessment briefs or amend these with prior approval from ATHE Ltd. The College's checklists that attribute responsibilities between partners list programme specifications as the responsibility of the awarding organisations. However, awarding organisations expect providers to produce their own programme specifications, working to their guidance. The College has not yet met the requirements of the Pearson Centre Guide to Assessment and Programme specification outlines and has not developed its own programme specifications. It is **advisable** for the College to produce its own programme specifications for all higher education programmes.

1.4 The College has planned limited review activity as part of its quality assurance approaches. The Programme Review Policy focuses on reporting only unusual matters. This would operate when there are causes for concern such as the suspension of LCM but

gives no opportunity for regular review as yet. The exception reporting approach focuses on performance indicators for programmes and making use of data from awarding organisations. There are no college-level quality assurance reviews. Timely approaches to gathering unit reviews from staff and students are not in place, though an Annual Programme Review template has been prepared. Many policies have been drafted very recently and some, such as the Assessment, Internal Verification, and Recognition of Prior Learning policies, are not yet implemented.

1.5 Arrangements with the three awarding organisations have been introduced over the three months preceding the review. ATHE Ltd's visit in October 2013 outlined actions which should have been addressed before teaching started. These include the development of a curriculum model and preparation of a completed scheme of work. Other requirements, such as training for assessment, approaches to ensure an independent verification system and a student record system, were to be demonstrated at the external verifier visit. The Pearson external verification visit was due shortly before the review visit but was postponed because of the QAA review.

How effectively does the College make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

1.6 The College relies heavily on its consultant and its awarding partners to ensure that it engages with key external reference points. Staff use the award and unit learning outcomes from the awarding organisations in those programme handbooks that exist. They were largely unaware of the different levels of units on programmes they are intending to run and unable to explain expected student development to meet the increasing demands of levels as described in *The framework of higher education qualification in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). Procedures to develop engagement with the Quality Code are not yet in place, though staff have been introduced to the Quality Code indicators in staff development sessions provided by the consultant.

How does the College use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?

1.7 No external verification of assessment has taken place. The College has submitted sample assessments as part of the Centre approval activity with ATHE Ltd and Pearson and is using these to guide developments. However, assessment briefs have been issued to students which do not conform to Pearson policy and practices about using assessment criteria and, during the visit, the College withdrew them. The newly-introduced processes for internal verification of assignments outlined in the Programme Review Policy and Procedures document had not been followed in designing these assessments and internal verification records were not available. According to the policy, internal verification is to be carried out prior to the use of assessment briefs, but the internal verification policy has not yet been implemented. The College has prepared a complementary standardisation policy intended for use with assessment practices and moderation of internal assessment judgements. This is not yet accompanied by assessment moderation guides and records of moderation practices. The arrangements for responsibility for the Academic Board's ultimate sign-off of assessment outcomes are not clear. It is **advisable** for the College to review and improve its assessment policy and practices with specific attention to internal verification.

1.8 Significant concerns exist about the College's management and delivery of standards. The College does not have consistent or effective management structures, policies or procedures in place. The College does not have coherent programmes in place that fulfil Pearson's requirements, and staff were unable to explain the differentiation of unit levels on the HND programmes. Arrangements for managing assessment are not robust.

The review team has **limited confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the programmes it offers on behalf of its awarding organisations.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does the College fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1 The College partially fulfils its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities. A simple management structure mirrors that for the management of academic standards outlined in paragraph 1.1. but is still at an early stage of implementation. The Vice Principal and Academic Manager share responsibility for leading and developing quality and enhancement of learning.

2.2 The College developed a brief Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy shortly before the review. The Strategy outlines the roles of the Academic Board and the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee, which has overall responsibility for teaching and learning quality. This Strategy is supplemented by outline policies for assessment and internal verification, student malpractice and student appeals, none of which have been fully implemented.

2.3 A potentially effective process is designed to monitor the quality of learning opportunities through a planned annual monitoring review which will be implemented at the end of the academic year. This will include student feedback at programme level and awarding organisation external reports. Assessment schedules were not available at the start of the academic year. The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee analyses student feedback which is actioned through the annual programme report forms. These forms are referred to the Academic Board where required, although the planned annual monitoring for the current higher education programmes has not yet occurred since the programmes are so recently established.

How effectively does the College make use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities?

2.4 Higher education programmes offered are listed on the Qualifications and Credit Framework so reference points are largely those of the awarding organisations' published specifications. Admissions policies demonstrate direct influence of the Quality Code, for example initial diagnostic assessment. The student submission refers explicitly to *Chapter B5: Student engagement* of the Quality Code. The College has made available sections of the Quality Code in the Teacher's Pack and the Senior Management Pack. Staff training has been focusing on *Chapter B3: Learning and teaching*. Although work has started on embedding the expectations and Indicators of the Quality Code, a great deal remains to be done. It is **advisable** for the College to formalise the introduction and embedding of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

How does the College assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?

2.5 A small teaching team of five part-time staff has extensive responsibilities for programme and unit leadership, assessment, internal verification and student pastoral support. Most units are delivered by one part-time member of staff. This range of responsibilities puts pressure on the staff team since they also teach in other organisations. However, students appreciate the quality and style of teaching. The College indicated that it

is discussing the appointment of a full-time member of staff to develop the Academic Manager role and to make greater use of the consultant in the near future. The senior management team recognises that there is much to do to develop the higher education provision and considers it necessary to strengthen the staff team. It is **advisable** for the College to provide sufficient academic staff to cover the required roles and responsibilities.

2.6 The College plans to use lesson observation to monitor the quality of teaching and has a clear process in place for its English language provision, which is below higher education level. The College will use an external assessor to undertake observation of teaching and provide feedback to staff, but the system has not yet been implemented for higher education. The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee will review outcomes from teaching observations and make recommendations for further training. Planned staff appraisals have not yet started. It would be **desirable** for the College to revise and implement its teaching observation policy and procedures.

2.7 The College uses formal and informal student feedback to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. It has plans for students to provide feedback systematically through end-of-programme surveys and staff-student meetings. Each teaching group has a student representative who raises issues with the College and informs the group of the outcome, for example, the recent increase in the provision of text books. However, there is no end-of-unit survey from students or staff to gather more specific unit-level information for programme reviews. The College promptly addresses issues raised by students and to their satisfaction, although there is no formal system for including students in committee membership. Oversight of feedback issues rests with the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee. It is **advisable** for the College to introduce end-of-unit surveys for staff and students to inform annual programme monitoring.

2.8 Student progress will be monitored through individual learning plans, which are at an early stage and are being developed in response to recommendations from ISI and ATHE Ltd.

How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?

2.9 Students are supported satisfactorily. The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee reviews programme resources and recommends possible improvements to the Academic Board. Students commented positively on the accessibility and helpfulness of both teaching and administrative staff. Students consider that the College counselled them effectively about alternative programmes when the LCM programmes were suspended. Where appropriate, the College made arrangements for 100 students (about half of those on LCM programmes) to transfer to suitable new programmes at the College. Students affected praised the College's handling of the situation. However, it was clear to the review team that not all students fully understood the curriculum content of their programmes, particularly in HND Business and Management.

2.10 During induction, students receive partial information on academic policies, programme structures, progression opportunities, assessment and academic misconduct as well as practical arrangements for living and studying in London. At that time the College assesses student language support needs, and provides opportunities for English language support. The College is conscious of the potential needs of students with disabilities and the use of reasonable adjustments where appropriate. An equality and diversity policy reinforces these values. A student welfare officer, also a lecturer, offers effective academic and pastoral support to students.

How effectively does the College develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

2.11 Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and the College operates an informal teaching staff recruitment system. Some members of staff have taken the opportunity to attend awarding organisation training. Some mechanisms for staff development ensure procedures for staff training and development focused on teaching, learning and assessment needs but further work, for example on the understanding of academic level, would be of benefit. A more proactive approach to staff development would further support the staff. It is **advisable** for the College to provide opportunities for staff development relating to higher education.

2.12 The College does not yet have formal mechanisms in place for identifying and sharing good practice among staff teams since programme teams are small, and all academic staff are employed part-time. They work together on an informal basis, with little formal opportunity for cross-course interaction. It would be **desirable** for the College to develop effective mechanisms for the identification and sharing of good practice.

How effectively does the College ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?

2.13 The College ensures access to learning resources through a brief learning resources policy which is reviewed by the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee. The College's small library and IT facilities generally meet student needs. Some students were concerned about the reliability and maintenance of the College's computers. The College stated that it planned to address these issues during the forthcoming holiday period. The extent of the problems with physical IT resources have impacted on the completion of an assessment in a specific ICT unit. The senior management team allocates the budget for IT and the library resources, which students consider to be appropriate to the provision.

2.14 The virtual learning environment is attractive and easy to use. It is used mainly as a repository for awarding organisation materials, programme documentation, assignment briefs and lecture notes. Students also have access to their attendance records, discussion forums and blogs and appreciate the interactive nature of the forums. Staff are able to track student use of the virtual learning environment and monitor student engagement.

2.15 There are significant concerns that the management of higher education programmes is not sufficiently developed in terms of policies and procedures intended to fully assure the quality of learning opportunities. Areas that are not fully developed include the active embedding of teacher observation, staff development, the sharing of good practice and annual programme monitoring and review. The very small, part-time staff team teach individual units and do not have the range or depth required across the whole programme.

The review team has **limited confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

3 Information about learning opportunities

How effectively does the College communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

3.1 The College produces a prospectus, a website, flyers with brief details of programmes and is developing student and staff handbooks. However, they are not presented as a coherent set of publications. The website and prospectus have been redeveloped over a period of time and the College acknowledges that they are currently incomplete. Although supported by an external agency in developing the website, up-to-date versions were not available for the start of the academic year. There are adequate induction arrangements for students who are given information about learning opportunities and living in London. Further information to students is available on the virtual learning environment. The student handbook provides some generic information but is not yet available to all students. The limited number of programme handbooks the team saw were based solely on information available from the awarding organisations. Students access generic specifications, policies and other information through awarding organisation websites. It is **advisable** for the College to ensure that a full set of programme, student and quality handbooks are provided to students and staff.

How effective are the College's arrangements for assuring that information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy?

3.2 Approaches to evaluating published material are informal and not presented consistently to demonstrate a coherent College approach. A full set of appropriate regulatory information has not been provided. Students do not, therefore, have access to comprehensive information about assessment malpractice processes and sanctions, or appeals procedures. The website, despite being recently updated, is briefly populated and is inaccurate in places, including information about programmes which are not currently offered.

3.3 The College intends to evaluate its publications policy by obtaining feedback from students and teaching and administrative staff about the usefulness of the information published. Students are positive about the reliability and scope of the pre-enrolment and induction information available about learning opportunities. Although there are plans for a clear public information audit process, no audit has yet been carried out.

3.4 The College staff described and understood the procedure for signing off public information. Programme coordinators collect information and pass it to the Academic Manager who collates and checks it against awarding organisation documentation and then passes it to the Vice Principal who carries out a further check and publishes the information. The Vice Principal is both author and publisher and there are no final checks. This process does not yet apply to the virtual learning environment. It is **advisable** for the College to review, develop and deploy a clear policy and procedures to manage its published information.

3.5 The College does not yet have a full and accurate set of its own published documents, including handbooks for staff and students. Processes to develop and manage publications are informal and no audit of information has been carried out. Some inaccuracies exist on the College website, particularly in the detail of programmes offered.

The team concludes that reliance **cannot** be placed on the information that the provider produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers.

Action plan³

Radcliffe College Ltd action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight of December 2013						
Essential	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it is essential for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that planning for and the design of programmes is coherent and complete (paragraph 1.2). 	Effective programme design and sequence of units across all higher education programmes	Director of Curriculum and Quality to lead on continuous professional development for and implementation of programme design and sequence for all higher education provision with lecturers and coordinators	March 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality Programme coordinators Lecturers	Senior Management Team	Academic Board to review impact via learner feedback, external examiner/ standards verifier reporting/ feedback
Advisable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date(s)	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
The team considers that it is advisable for the College to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the consistent and effective operation of its academic 	Effective academic management structure, accountability, responsibility and staffing	Restructure positions and lines of responsibility, amend job descriptions and have adequate staff numbers with the requisite	April 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Senior Management Team	Academic Board to review impact via learner feedback, external

³ The College has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan, in conjunction with the College's awarding organisations.

management structures (paragraph 1.1)		skills to undertake academic management New staff to undergo robust recruitment and selection procedures				examiner/ standards verifier reporting/ feedback Staff appraisal as appropriate
• produce its own programme specifications for all higher education programmes (paragraph 1.3)	Programme specifications for all higher education programmes	Design issue programme specifications to relevant members of staff	June 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality with programme coordinators	Academic Board	Academic Board to comment on higher education programme specifications and review impact via external examiner/ standards verifier reporting/ feedback
• review and improve its assessment policy and practices with specific attention to internal verification (paragraphs 1.7 and 2.3)	1 Implement internal verification policy for internally assessed higher education programmes	1 Assessors to undertake continuous professional development for internal verification and then carry out the same	April 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Academic Board	Academic Board to review feedback from external examiner/ standards verifier/external verifier, annual monitoring reporting/ feedback
	2 Assessment moderation/internal verification guides for staff and records of	2 Draft assessment moderation/internal verification guides and complete records of	April 2014	Programme teams	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Assessment Board to scrutinise completed

	moderation practices	moderation/internal verification				documents
	3 Clear Academic Board sign-off for assessment outcomes	3 Assessment Board meet to agree final internal unit and programme grades	August 2014	Programme coordinators	Academic Board	Senior Management Team to review Academic Board sign-off process
	4 Assessment schedules provided to learners at the beginning of the programme	4 Assessment schedules drafted and issued to learners during induction	June 2014	Programme coordinators	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Assessment Board to check systems are in place for next induction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> formalise the introduction and embedding of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (paragraph 2.4) 	Planned introduction of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) over the course of two years or less	Mapping of the Quality Code across plans, policies and procedures Centre files organised by the Quality Code All policies and procedures embed the latest version of the Quality Code	August 2014 December 2015	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Academic Board	Academic Board evaluates the extent to which the Quality Code has been embedded across plans, policies and procedures and refers to QAA annual monitoring visit outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide sufficient academic staff to cover the roles and responsibilities (paragraph 2.5) 	1 Director of Curriculum and Quality 2 Programme coordinators 3 Academic Operations Manager 4 Increased proportion	Director of Curriculum and Quality oversees programme planning, implementation and quality assurance Programme coordinators lead on programme	February 2014	Senior Management Team	Academic Board	Academic Board evaluates impact through end-of-unit surveys, external examiner/standards verifier/external

	of full-time and/or significant part-time lecturers	delivery and lecturers have more programme delivery time				verifier reports Staff appraisal after 6 months and 12 months in post
• introduce end of unit surveys for staff and students to inform annual programme monitoring (paragraph 2.7)	End-of-unit surveys developed and issued	End-of-unit surveys commenced and scheduled according to each unit completion	April 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee to review effectiveness of end-of-unit surveys
• provide opportunities for staff development relating to higher education (paragraph 2.11)	Internal staff development to improve academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and information about higher education provision Externally sourced staff development from the awarding body and/or specialists	Staff development initially informed by training needs analysis and lesson observations, staff appraisals External staff development informed by external examiner/verifiers' reports or other monitoring or review system	May 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Academic Board Senior Management	Academic Board evaluates internal and external staff development by follow-up lesson observations and/or learner surveys Staff to evaluate external staff development and feedback to Senior Management
• ensure that a full set of programme, student and quality handbooks are	Detailed: 1 Student Handbook 2 Staff Handbook	Handbooks drafted and issued Website information reviewed and updated	August 2014 September 2014	Vice Principal Vice Principal	Senior Management Team Academic Board	Senior Management Team and Academic Board evaluate handbooks and

14	provided to students and staff (paragraph 3.1)	3 Quality Handbook		August 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality		website information based on learner surveys and public information audit
		4 Website information		August 2014	Vice Principal		
	• review, develop and deploy a clear policy and procedures to manage its published information (paragraph 3.4).	Policy and procedure for information about higher education provision	Draft a policy and procedure for information about higher education provision, including applying the public information audit Fully implement the policy and procedure	July 2014 August 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Academic Board	Academic Board evaluates the policy and procedure for information about higher education provision, based on staff and learner feedback via meetings and surveys
	Desirable	Intended outcomes	Actions to be taken to achieve intended outcomes	Target date/s	Action by	Reported to	Evaluation (process or evidence)
	The team considers that it is desirable for the College to:						
	• revise and implement its teaching observation policy and procedures (paragraph 2.6)	1 Revised teaching observation policy and procedures drafted and implemented 2 Lesson observation records 3 Annual appraisals	Redrafted teaching observation policy and procedures, with closer assignment to the Quality Code Lesson observations undertaken by Director of Curriculum and Quality Senior Management Team	May 2014 September 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality Senior Management Team	Senior Management Team and Academic Board	Senior Management Team and Academic Board evaluate lesson observation grade profile and identify training needs

	informed by outcomes of lesson observation records	members undertake annual appraisals, which are informed by lesson observations records				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop effective mechanisms for the identification and sharing of good practice (paragraph 2.12). 	Peer observations and focused team meetings with the Director of Curriculum and Quality to identify good practice and plan its implementation	<p>Peer observations and focused team meetings are used to share and inform teaching, learning and assessment strategies and subsequent continuous professional development activities</p> <p>Pro forma to log identification and sharing of good practice</p>	August 2014	Director of Curriculum and Quality	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee evaluate sharing of good practice by reviewing peer observation records, subsequent continuous professional development activities, participation rates and implementation of continuous professional development to own activities

About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/educational-oversight.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).⁴

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, higher education providers manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by degree-awarding bodies for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standards**.

awarding body A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA .

awarding organisation An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed or recognised to perform a particular function. QAA has been recognised by UKBA as a designated body for the purpose of providing educational oversight.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

external examiner An independent expert appointed by an institution to comment on student achievement in relation to established academic standards and to look at approaches to assessment.

framework for higher education qualifications A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland*.

good practice A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's review processes.

highly trusted sponsor An organisation that the UK Government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/REO-designated-providers-handbook-13.aspx

learning opportunities The provision made for students' learning, including planned study, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, and resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios).

learning outcomes What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

programme (of study) An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

programme specifications Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **programmes** of study, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

provider (s) (of higher education) Organisations that deliver higher education. In the UK they may be a degree-awarding body or another organisation that offers programmes of higher education on behalf of degree-awarding bodies or awarding organisations. In the context of Review for Specific Course Designation the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

quality See **academic quality**.

Quality Code Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of reference points for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the Expectations that all providers are required to meet.

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

subject benchmark statement A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

threshold academic standards The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks for higher education qualifications** and **subject benchmark statements**. See also **academic standards**.

QAA645 - R3794 - Mar/14

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2014
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000
Email enquiries@qaa.ac.uk
Web www.qaa.ac.uk

Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786